



Travel Industry Looks Towards the Future

2000 Governor's Tourism Conference Underway

M2K: The Montana Millennium will be the theme for this year's Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation to be held at Big Sky Ski and Summer Resort, April 10-11. The two-day event will focus



on strengthening Montana's tourism and recreation operations, identifying and addressing current and future challenges, and celebrating the people, places and communities that give meaning and worth to our endeavors.

Registration for the conference is \$120 prior to March 23; \$140 March 24-April 4; \$160 after April 4; student registration \$50. An agenda and registration form will be mailed out to you shortly. To reserve your room at Big Sky Ski & Summer Resort, call 1-800-548-4486 or go to the lodging section of Big Sky's website: www.bigskyresort.com.

If you are interested in exhibitor or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Travel Montana's Consumer Marketing Manager, Suzanne Elfstrom at (406) 444-2654, fax (406) 444-1800, (800) 548-3390 ext #2 (outside Montana) or e-mail: suzanne@visitmt.com. February 15 is the deadline to reserve your exhibit booth

and/or sponsor sign up.

For more information on the Governor's Conference call Travel Montana at (406) 444-2654 or check out our Intranet site: travelmontana.state.mt.us/conference



Montana Teams up with American Express

Travel Montana and American Express have formed a cooperative marketing partnership to promote travel to Montana. A 12-page Montana Travel Planner will be featured in the March issue of Travel and Leisure and the April issue of Food & Wine. The total circulation for both publications is 950,000.

"We are thrilled American Express chose us to be a partner in this endeavor."

"In order to expand our marketing dollar we have been looking to partner with a variety of organizations," says Travel Montana Director, Matthew Cohn. "We are thrilled American Express chose us to be a partner in this endeavor." Cohn explains that an additional 50,000 Travel Planners will be direct mailed to a predictive model of American Express Cardmembers most likely to choose Montana as their vacation destination. The total distribution of the planner will reach 1 million people.

Film Office Wraps Up 1999

Montana wraps up its production year in "fine shape" with one feature film, several prominent TV programs and numerous commercial stills and documentaries. Some of this year's highlights include: "Big Eden," an independent feature film shot in West Glacier and the Flathead; "Guide Season," a one-hour PBS drama filmed in Livingston/Paradise Valley and the Bridger/Pryor areas; and a variety of commercials advertising everything from Motorola cellular phones to vehicles from almost every car/truck manufacturer.

According to Montana Film Office Manager, Lonie Stimac, this was one of the most successful years ever for commercial production. She explains one of the best things about 1999 is the increased numbers of Montanans that were hired to crew the projects. These projects may also have some tourism promotion potential that may pay high dividends for years to come.

A Winning Web

Travel Montana's website, visitmt.com, was recently named a top tourism website in a survey commissioned by Travel Alberta, Canada. The report, Best Practice in Tourism Web Sites, identified the site's "Virtual Visitor" page as an "innovative feature." Montana's "Virtual Visitor" page provides access to photographs, postcards, recipes and general information on the state. Through November 30, 1999, the website hosted 1.2 million visitors for the year.

Rounding Up the International Visitor

Tour Operators from Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, France, Belgium and the Netherlands will attend the RMI Winter Round Up January 14-16 in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Overseas Marketing Manager, Pam Gosink, explains that the operators are curious about summer as well as winter products, especially the Italians. She encourages Montana suppliers interested in the international market, with a commissionable tourism product, to attend the meeting. For registration contact RMI's Susan Maxwell at (307) 637-4977 or e-mail: SMaxwell@RMI-RealAmerica.com. Following the Round Up, Montana will host 15 tour operators on a guest ranch/lodge "fam tour."

CTAP Grant Projects Ready To Roll

Travel Montana's three 1998-99 Community Tourism Assessment Program (CTAP) Communities have submitted projects for grant funding.

- Anaconda/Deer Lodge County plans to use a \$20,000 CTAP Grant to develop an Anaconda Washoe Smelter Stack viewing and interpretive site.

- Dillon/Beaverhead County plans to use a \$6,000 CTAP Grant to add a modern heating/

cooling system to its historic Union Pacific Depot Community Theater in downtown Dillon.

- Hardin/Big Horn County plans to use a \$20,000 CTAP Grant to renovate the abandoned Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad Depot into a visitor/community center.

Since CTAP's beginning in 1991, 18 communities have completed the process with \$286,000 from Travel Montana's "bed tax" funds being invested in their identified priority projects. The 1999-2000 programs are Glasgow, Red Lodge and Whitehall. They expect to be finished by April 2000.

Cultural Tourism Institute Set For Missoula

February 23-26

Marketing and developing ideas for Montana's Cultural Tourism products and packages are the focus of the Cultural Tourism Institute February 23-26, in Missoula.

The Institute is being offered by the Missoula Cultural Council, Montana Arts Council, Travel Montana, and a variety of Missoula businesses and cultural organizations.

To register or for more information, contact the Missoula Cultural Council, 721-9620 or e-mail: mcc@bigsky.net. Information is also available on MCC's website: www.missoulacultural.org. The registration fee is \$65, with a \$50 early bird registration, before February 1. This covers

the costs of the Institute presentations, handbook, opening reception, and Friday luncheon. Other meals, lodging, and optional tours are separate.

Welcome Carol

Carol Johansen recently joined the staff of Travel Montana as Matthew Cohn's administrative assistant. Carol comes to us with seven years of tourism and travel experience. She began her career with the Wyoming Division of Tourism and recently returned to the area after spending three years in Seattle as a program manager for an outbound international tour operator.

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.

Calendar of Events

January

- 10-13** Cross Country Ski Media Tour, Yellowstone Country/West Yellowstone
- 14-16** RMI Winter Round-Up, Jackson Hole, WY
- 16-20** Montana International Winter "fam tour"
- 20-30** Sundance Film Festival, Park City, UT

February

- 1-4** Snowmobile Media Tour, West Yellowstone
- 7-8** Tourism Advisory Council Meeting, Billings



Travel Montana

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